

Your Tools: Understanding and using the brilliance of your own body in high-end piano work

Presented to the Europiano 2012 Conference
Amersfoort, Holland
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- “Always aim for the high end.”
Willis Snyder
- “If you can make a radical positive change in the sound and feel of a piano in a relatively short amount of time, you win---big---for the rest of your career.”
Norman Neblett
- “PIANO WORK IS A WHOLE-BODY, FEELING, PHYSICAL EVENT,
- NOT AN ANALYTICAL, THOUGHT-BASED, 'NECK-UP' EVENT.”
David Andersen

BEFORE WE BEGIN

- Focus
- Language
- I love questions
- Take care of yourself
- Please read and re-read the material
- YOU are in the top tier of this craft---why?
- YOU'RE HERE

THANK YOU:

Jack Cofer

Bill Garlick

Virgil Smith

Tom Servinsky

Barbara Pease Renner

Ted Sambell

Eric Schandall

Robert Westerra

David Stanwood

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- The Big Takeaway, the Million-dollar Tip: it is ALL about WHAT you pay attention to
- You can work at the craft of directing your attention
- Neuroscience: there is an explosion of data confirming that the state of being known as "flow," "Self One," "in the zone," "in the present moment," achieves maximum use of the person's skillset and energy
- with minimum stress and maximum personal pleasure, fulfillment, enjoyment, whatever---the state of being you like best.
- the learning curve goes straight up when you pay attention
- relaxed mastery
- 10,000-hour rule
- trust the whole system

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- Aliens play a game
- multi-hundred-trillion-dollar package
- taken completely for granted by human beings---what % of the time?
- I'm asking you to practice the craft of appreciating your "package," your body, your life, your existence here
- practical, evidence-based gratitude as expressed and experienced when you work
- neuroscience proves it: GRATITUDE, the feeling of it, the real whole-being experience of it, is the clinically-proven **master-releaser** of
- all the best health-and-well-being-improving hormones and chemicals your body contains

- my statement: The more you "come down out of the control tower," get out of your head—
- -your constant stream of mostly negative thoughts that run virtually non-stop and have since childhood---
 - “constant comment”
 - overwhelmingly negative---95%
- and get into paying attention to your body doing the work, the more the feeling of gratitude (fulfillment, equanimity, "okayness") occurs

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- HUGE challenge
- again, neuroscience: 85% of the thoughts you have are habitual (countless thousands of times) and 85% of THOSE thoughts are negative.
- our answer as artisans? make our work, the physical reality of it, the focus of attention. Let the thoughts run; they'll slowly recede into the background.
- the secret, and the big-take-away: shift your attention; the only thing you can really, practically control.

- imagine a meeting where an ego-filled, angst-ridden, self-doubting blowhard tries to take the room hostage.
- As leader, what do you say?
- "Thanks for sharing; we heard you loud and clear. Please move to the back and sit down; we're moving on."
- using your daily work to help you stay healthy and happy: what a concept...<g>
- what does this have to do with me?

- you are living inside of, you ARE, the **Ultimate Tool**
- ha ha ha: Spreeman, Erwin, Nossaman
- if you could really take this in, you'd be on the floor weeping with joy and relief---and your life would radically change for the better
- Socrates was a great man: questions of oneself are the way to happiness, fulfillment, peace, whatever:
- do you enjoy your work a majority of the time?
- love music?
- love pianos?
- love hand/body work?
- are you working with passion?

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- if not,
- are you living with passion?
- are you consistently feeling engaged and excited about life, your plans, your vision, your dreams?
- obviously (Oprah) human beings need to find something they're passionate about and dedicated to
- IMO what I'm offering are practical internal AND external tools to grow and nourish your passion and dedication, to get you in the zone of practical gratitude and keep you there:

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- INTERNAL:
- make the work (tuning, voicing, regulating) the moment-to-moment sensation of it, the focus of your attention.
- what you pay attention to is the only control you really have---and realizing that is a powerful positive force in your life
- trust your multi-hundred-billion-dollar package: "let your body do the work."
- breathe: your breath is actually the source of your life; it's wonderful to just feel it, to watch yourself being kept alive.

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- EXTERNAL:
- regulation by feel and sound:
- letoff (sound and slow test "blow")
- jack position: what you were taught is merely the minimum
 - "pock" is a nasty sound
- rep lever height (winking the jack is WAY more precise than you think)
- drop by feel, not sight---where is the best feeling aftertouch? Do drop last;
- **drop sculpts aftertouch**
- setting **sacred key travel** to .1mm tolerance---dip block as "best friend"
- setting sacred aftertouch by blow distance: **blow distance sculpts aftertouch**
- body sensitivity: Wonder Digit & the Eycrometer

- voicing by feel:
- let the felt "talk" to you
- listen "quick and soft"
- two reliable protocols: one by sight, one by feel, both by ear
<g>
- at first, be conservative: "sneak up on it."
- that's why these two protocols are so effective: they're precise, simple, quick, controllable
- get a good headlamp

- TUNING:
- tune by ear, not by check
- go "open string"
- sculpting the temperament
- each side of every two-note interval check is sculptable (shimmable, crackable)
- all fourths beat the same: "agua"
- the note being tuned: literally enter the world of the sound
- focus on the feeling of the pin
- relax your muscles

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FINAL THOUGHTS

- Carpe Diem
- Raise your rates, because
- YOU BRING IMMENSE VALUE TO YOUR CLIENTS
- Have a lot of fun
- Get “off the grid” frequently
- Make work sacred
- RELAX
- Be exactly who you are
- And, finally..... EMBRACE the PARADOX: “Triple-A & the 800-pound gorilla”

THANK YOU from the bottom of my heart for this opportunity---and the precious gift of your attention...